

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace the originally filed claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (new): A method which may be used for reducing sludge formation during the biological treatment of an aqueous effluent, said method comprising reducing the amount of sludge formed during the biological treatment of an aqueous effluent by injecting an ozone containing gas into an aeration tank which contains said effluent, wherein:

- a) during at least one portion of said method, said effluent is in contact with microorganisms;
- b) said ozone containing gas comprises at least about 2.5 mg of ozone per liter of said gas injected into said tank;
- c) said gas is injected into said tank by an apparatus; and
- d) said apparatus produces an emulsion of ozone containing gas in said effluent.

Claim 7 (new): The method of claim 6, wherein said ozone containing gas comprises less than about 300 mg of ozone per liter of said gas.

Claim 8 (new): The method of claim 6, wherein said apparatus comprises:

- a) a venturi supplied by a pump; and
- b) an injection means for injecting said gas into the throat of said venturi.

Claim 9 (new): The method of claim 7, wherein said apparatus comprises:

- a) a venturi supplied by a pump; and
- b) an injection means for injecting said gas into the throat of said venturi.

Claim 10 (new): The method of claim 6, wherein said apparatus comprises:

- a) a turbine; and
- b) an injection means for injecting said gas into said turbine.

Claim 11 (new): The method of claim 7, wherein said apparatus comprises:

- a) a turbine; and
- b) an injection means for injecting said gas into said turbine.

Claim 12 (new): The method of claim 10, wherein:

- a) said apparatus further comprises:
 - 1) a self-suction turbine; and
 - 2) a propeller;
- b) said self-suction turbine and said propeller are mounted on a hollow shaft;
and
- c) said hollow shaft supplies said gas to said turbine.

Claim 13 (new): The method of claim 11, wherein:

- a) said apparatus further comprises:
 - 1) a self-suction turbine; and
 - 2) a propeller;
- b) said self-suction turbine and said propeller are mounted on a hollow shaft;
and
- c) said hollow shaft supplies said gas to said turbine.